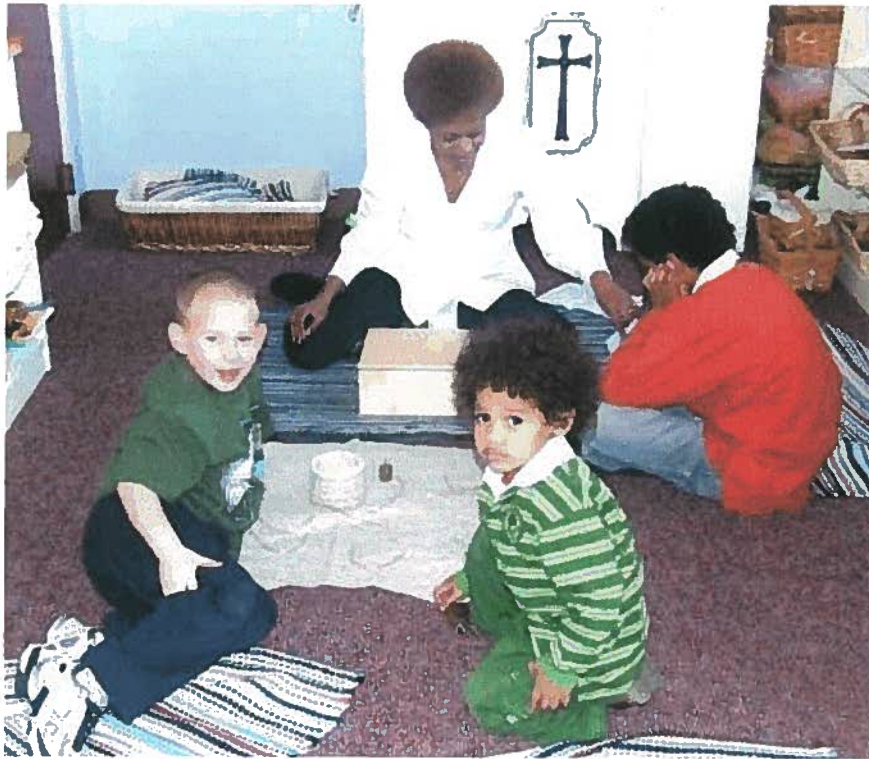


*"...He who began a good work in you
will carry it on to completion...."*
Philippians 1:16 (NIV)



The Episcopal Church of Saint John and Saint Mark
2425 Cherry Laurel Lane
Albany, Georgia 31705
www.stjohnandstmark.org

Our Parish

Average Sunday Attendance
50

Membership

Children
10 & Under - 10
11-18 years - 7

Adults
33% are in 50's
45% are 61 or older

Diversity
42% African-American
12% Nigerians
42% Caucasian
2% Asian-American
2% Hispanic

76% belonged at one time to another denomination

64% have college degrees,
47 % advanced

Average weekly pledge per pledging unit
\$50.39

2008 Budget Highlights

Revenue - \$143,000
Expenses - \$136,280

An Introduction to The Episcopal Church of St. John & St. Mark

In 1994, a 500-year flood damaged St. Mark's, a 40-year-old, largely White mission, and destroyed St. John's, a 90-year-old African-American mission. As St. Mark's was *being restored*, both congregations met there for services. The two churches merged in 1996. By 2003, the Episcopal Church of St. John and St. Mark had become a parish.

Our priest retired in 2007, leaving an unusually diverse congregation, racially, culturally, and spiritually. (See the side bar). We are Anglo-Catholic, charismatic, traditional, liberal, and agnostic, with a few Zen Baptists. To thrive, our church must grow; but we do not want to lose our diversity as our membership changes.

Our process of calling a priest has included study of our own nature as a parish, as well as our desires for the future. We seek a priest who will lead us in both outreach and in-reach, who will help us

- participate actively at all levels of service
- develop opportunities for lay ministry
- deepen our prayer and spiritual life practice
- offer Christian Education for all ages
- grow in our commitment to God, God's people, and the world

Our experience of our diversity has led us to this recognition: in our church, we most want a climate in which everyone feels accepted as a child of God.

For further information about our call for a priest, please contact

The Rev. Canon Neal Phelps
Diocesan Deployment Officer
The Episcopal Diocese of Georgia
611 E Bay Street
Savannah GA

Our Worship

Our worship is participatory. We currently have one service at 11:00 Sunday mornings and a midweek service Wednesday evening. Both services include Holy Eucharist and laying on of hands for healing. Only the Sunday service includes music. Our worship is highly participatory as we heed the injunction that all who are baptized are ministers.

Preparation

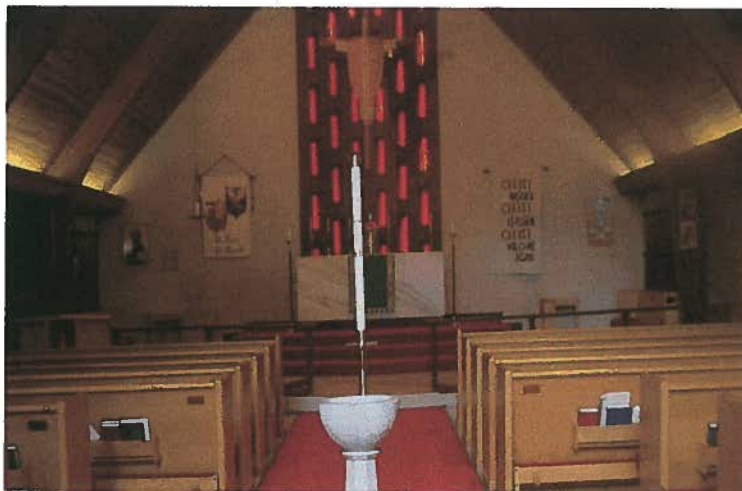
A small but active Altar Guild prepares the altar for services. Ushers take turns greeting in the narthex, serving as Oblation Bearers, passing the plate during the offertory, and giving directions to visitors as needed.

The Service

Both youths and adults serve as acolytes. Lay Eucharistic Ministers, both men and women, assist the priest. We currently use the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. In the past we have used services from the New Zealand Prayer Book, and have substituted the St. Thomas Creed for Prayer Book creeds. The Wednesday service is a healing ministry of priest and laity. Intercessors lead the prayers of the people from within the congregation.

Music

Our song leaders and guitarists include members of three generations of one family. We also have an organist two Sundays per month, and Synthia, a digital hymnal programmed to play on the keyboard. Our music is a combination of hymns, both traditional and contemporary; our choir is the congregation. We are blessed to be able to make a joyful noise.



OUR MINISTRIES

What larger churches accomplish through paid staff and formal committee structure, we tend to do through personal ministries. Individuals see a need they regard as worthwhile and adopt that as their ministry, often anonymously. The strength of our ministries is this personal dedication.

Christian Education

Children's Church

Godly Play allows us to effectively combine children of different ages into one class with one teacher. A small but faithful group of teachers rotate leadership and work to make the language of the church and religion familiar to the children and Christianity part of the children's daily lives

Adult Education

- At present, we are studying The Alpha Course, using video presentations followed by small group discussion. That course is scheduled to run through December.
- Before The Alpha Course began, there were two adult groups, both lay led, meeting at 10 a.m. One group offered traditional Bible study while the other group explored many spiritual paths. These groups will resume in January 2009.

Cursillo

At Honey Creek, the diocesan conference center on the Georgia coast, teams of clergy and laity offer short courses to develop adult leadership in the church. These three-day weekends are followed by ongoing meetings in the regional convocations. A number of our members have both participated in and led Cursillos and have universally reported the work as an uplifting experience.

Care & Shepherding is a ministry of hospitality, a lower case imitation of Holy Communion, and the main engine of the community life of the church. It is intended to unify the church in God's peace and goodwill and takes three forms: the social hour, the funeral repast, and dinner and flowers.

- *The Social Hour:* After the worship service, one of four groups serves a light meal or heavy hors d'oeuvres at their own expense, and invites everybody, visitors included, to eat. More members of the congregation, and a greater cross-section of those members, attend this social hour than any other regular event of the church outside of the worship service. In this hospitable environment, both members and visitors invest 30 to 45 minutes per week opening to each other in personal relationships that make the congregation feel like a family.
- *The Funeral Repast:* When we have a funeral, a group of members host an abundant meal for people attending the funeral service. Our parishioners know that they can depend on the good will of their church family to provide a setting in which all feel welcome and comfortable supporting each other. This funeral ministry is supported by the ECW.

- *Dinner and Flowers:* When members cannot attend services but would appreciate a visit, a meal and something beautiful, others bring them flowers from the altar and food from the shepherding table. In other cases, food is sent home with people who are able to attend but because of infirmity or isolation don't cook balanced meals for themselves. This ministry depends on generous people who bring enough food to the shepherding table to share, people who celebrate their blessings by offering flowers to the church, and a few faithful people who discover where the abundance is needed and take it there.

Communication

Our monthly newsletter The Messenger is guaranteed to be full of good stuff! Our weekly bulletin, congratulatory post cards, and administrative support in the church office are all provided by volunteers.

Organizations

- **Episcopal Church Women (ECW).** Women in the ECW work together out of loyalty to the church and friendship with each other. They plan most of the communal events of the church, including the annual Black History celebration. The ECW also conducts annual fund raisers for donations to community organizations and for projects of the church. In addition, the ECW always represents the church within the convocation, diocese, and beyond. The group tries to meet monthly.
- **Men of the Church** are also scheduled to meet monthly. They meet for fellowship and to consider support of the church and the community. The men conduct annual fund raisers for donations to area organizations and contribute toward the expenses of the church. In addition, the club sponsors Men's Day bi-annually, celebrating with a guest speaker and luncheon. Members also undertake personal ministries for the care of grounds and buildings, and to support the work of the ECW.

Community Action

- *Neighbors in Need*, sponsored by St. Teresa's Catholic Church and staffed by Franciscan Sisters offers a soup kitchen, food pantry and thrift store. Our members contribute canned goods and other staple food items, clothing, bedding, and household items
- *Facilities for Community Organizations:* Currently, the Radium Springs Neighborhood Association, and the Albany chapter of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) use our facilities each month. In October 2008, The Albany Chorale will present their season-opening concert at St. John & St. Mark's.
- *The Labyrinth Ministry:* We maintain two labyrinths, both for parishioners and for the larger community. A portable Chartres-style labyrinth painted on canvas unfolds to fit the floor space in Primo Hall. An outdoor 7-circuit path outlined in brick and paved in straw is set in a shady park across the street from the church. The canvas labyrinth is opened at St. John and St. Mark's on special occasions and has been transported for use at other churches as well. The labyrinth park is open to anyone at any time for walking meditation, centering prayer or other spiritual practice. When requested, we offer an orientation on the history and use of the labyrinths.

Our Financial Summary

	2008 Budget	Actual (a/o 08-31-08)	2007 Budget	Actual
Income				
Pledges/Plate Offering	130,280	78,759	139,128	125,023
Other Income	6,000	5,854	13,000	24,883
Total Income	136,280	84,613	152,128	149,906
Expenses				
Diocese	13,320	8,880	12,100	12,100
Salaries & Benefits	36,934	21,561	75,992	73,510
Parish Operations/Programs	86,026	42,514	64,036	61,328
Total Expense	136,280	72,955	152,128	146,838

Notes:

- St John and St. Mark's has no financial debt
- Restricted Funds - \$20,698
- Mutual Fund - \$25,183
- We pay the full amount asked by the diocese

Our Building and Grounds

The *main church* was built in 1960 and is shaped like an ark. The inside has exposed wooden beams and a ribbon of stained glass under the eaves. Behind the altar, a large stained glass window captures the morning sun.

In the aisle of the church stands the marble baptismal font from St. John's. To the side, the candles of St. Mark's Marian niche glow in the corner. Over the altar hangs the Risen Christ, welcoming us to our worship and meditation. Over the door of the church hangs the Suffering Christ, saved from St. John's. We see him as we leave to re-enter the suffering world. We in the congregation live between them.

Shipp's Hall

Built in 1953, Shipp's Hall was originally consecrated as St. Mark's Church. When the current church was built, the old church became our parish hall, with administrative offices, full kitchen, and Sunday school. When Primo Hall was dedicated as the new parish hall in 2000, our first building was named for St. Mark's first full time vicar, Harry W. Shipp, who retired as the 8th Bishop of Georgia.

Primo Hall

Our current parish hall stands high among the trees in anticipation of another flood. Built to accommodate parish growth after the two churches merged, the parish hall includes a commercial kitchen, big-screen TV, state-of-the-art sound system and a dance floor. The building was dedicated in 2000 and was named for Quintin E. Primo, the first vicar of St. John's.

Tom Jeffs Memorial Garden

The church and the two halls look out on a meditation garden with benches and a small pool. A section of this courtyard was consecrated in 2002 as a memorial garden in which ashes of parishioners return to the earth.

Labyrinth Park

Across Cherry Laurel Lane from the church is a park with benches, picnic tables, and a 7-circuit labyrinth. The labyrinth was dedicated at sunset. During the ceremony, a fox showed himself then went his way. The park is open to anyone at any time for walking meditation or other spiritual practice.



Rectory

A few blocks from the church is a 4-bedroom, 3-bath home that has been both the rectory and rental property. The tri-level house has a large screened porch on the second level and guest suite and carport on the lower level. The home is excellent for a family and for entertaining.

A Sketch of Albany, Georgia

With a population of almost 95,000, Albany is the center of the 5-county Albany Metro Area of 164,000 and the economic hub of Southwest Georgia. But people still greet each other on the street, which makes Albany feel like a small town. Southwest Georgia is largely rural and agricultural, with large plantations of pine forest and wetland in the counties and industrial employers in the cities. Winters are mild; summers are hot. The heat and humidity make Albany lush with greenery and flowers. Branches of live oaks spread into canopies over the avenues; and in the spring, all areas of the city bloom with dogwoods, azaleas, and Japanese magnolias.

In 1994, the Flint River poured through Albany in a 500-year flood, cutting the city in half and backing into the storm drains to inundate parts of the city far above the flood plain. The flood caused millions of dollars in damage and disrupted life for weeks. But destructive as the flood was, our city's response made Albany quite proud of itself, for in a city long divided by racial and economic issues, everybody pulled together to sandbag the river and help those forced out of their homes and jobs. In 1996, community leaders agreed on a master plan to revitalize downtown, which had been languishing for decades before it went under water. Recently, Albany was listed as one of the livable cities in Georgia.

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE 5-COUNTY ALBANY METRO AREA

County:	Dougherty	Lee	Worth	Terrell	Baker
County Seat:	Albany	Leesburg	Sylvester	Dawson	Newton
Population:	94,800	32,495	21,938	10,657	4,098
Median age of residents:	32	33	36	35	35
Median household income:	\$30,934	\$48,600	\$32,384	\$26,969	\$30,338
Median value of homes:	\$73,900	\$102,900	\$66,000	\$59,300	\$62,700

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Number of students	16,000	6,100	4,000	1,080	420
Number of schools	28	6	5	4	1
Average SAT scores:	1363	1481	1337	1216	1394

Georgia 1472
National 1511

Every public elementary school has a kindergarten
Dougherty County has 6 magnet schools
25% of Terrell County students attend private schools
Baker County has 1 school, Pre-k through 12
Lee County schools are rated among the best in Georgia

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Number of students

3,000. Enrollments range from 10 to 845

Seven schools offer Pre-K through 12

Albany has an active organization of home schoolers and many private pre-k's and kindergartens.

FIVE COLLEGES

Students graduating from a Georgia high school with a B average in specific courses are eligible for *tuition-free* under-graduate education at schools in the University System of Georgia (USG) or under the Department of Adult and Technical Education (DATE).

- Albany State University - (USG) Enrollment: 3900. Historically black college offering bachelor's, master's and education specialist degrees
- Darton College - (USG) Enrollment 4700. A two-year college leading in televised and on-line courses. Offers associate's degrees.
- Albany Technical College - (DATE) Enrollment: 3000. Programs designed in cooperation with local businesses. Offers certifications and associate of applied science degrees.
- LaGrange College at Albany - (extension campus of a private college) Enrollment in Albany: 70 Offers bachelor's and master's degrees in Organizational Leadership. Students must have already completed at least two years of a bachelor's degree.
- Troy State University at Albany - (extension campus of a school in the University System of Alabama) Offers master's degree in management.

ELEVEN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

All public libraries offer internet access; materials in print, DVD, and videotape; talking books; FAX and photocopy machines; and children's programs. Library cards are free. All libraries are members of the Public Information Network, so parent or guardian must sign for people under 18.

Dougherty County

Main library downtown
4 branches

Lee County

Main library in Leesburg
branches in Redbone
and Smithville

Worth County

County library in Sylvester

Also open to the public:

ASU library (DoCo residents)

Darton College library

Law library at courthouse

Terrell County

County library in Dawson

Baker County

County library in Newton

HEALTH CARE

- Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital
Non-profit, 450-bed tertiary-care facility
Neonatal intensive care, cardiovascular surgery, and radiation oncology
Offers 7 other health centers, including one in Lee and one in Worth
- Palmyra Medical Center
A 215-bed member of the Healthcare Corporation of America
- EMS 911 service available from 5 stations in Albany, 3 stations in Lee
- Many medical specialists, private clinics, and counseling centers
- Growing number of complementary care providers

HOUSES OF WORSHIP

- About 400 in the 5-county metro area, predominantly Baptist
- Four are Episcopalian
- Most other Christian sects are represented, as well as Judaism and Islam

LARGEST EMPLOYERS

- Phoebe Putney Health Systems (3,400)
- Marine Corps Logistics Base (3,080)
- Dougherty County Board of Education (3,045)
- Procter & Gamble (1,400)
- Cooper Tire & Rubber Company (1,300)

PLANTATIONS

Dougherty	Lee	Worth	Terrell	Baker
14	5	12	8	3

Many plantations are hunting preserves with their own lodges and airstrips.
Orvis rated Albany's Wynnfield best of its class in 2005.

ENTERTAINMENT

Mass Media

- TV stations: 2 in Albany, and cable access in all counties except Baker
- Radio stations: 15 in Albany
- Newspapers: 1 daily and 2 weeklies in Albany; weeklies in Lee, Worth, and Terrell

Culture

- Theater, symphony, chamber ensembles, ballet, chorale, opera workshop
- Museums of history, science, art
- Flint RiverQuarium, Imax theater, Wetherbee Planetarium
- Local music scene in restaurants, bars and clubs
- Movies
- Fairs, festivals and outdoor concerts from early spring through fall

Sports

- Professional football
- High school and college athletics for men and women
- Year-around golf and tennis (10 area golf courses, many more tennis courts)
- Auto sports, cycle sports, skate sports, water sports, running
- Horse shows, dog trials
- Organized sports offered through the city department of recreation, YMCA, churches and other organizations

Outdoor Recreation

- Camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, bird watching
- Activities at Chehaw Wild Animal Park
- Activities at Turtle Grove Play Park

If You Feel Like Traveling

Atlanta - 3 hours north	Mountains - 4 hours north
Savannah - 4 hours east	Florida Beaches - 2 hours south
Tallahassee - 2 hours south	Disney World - 5 hours south
Charleston - 6 hours north	

For more information, check the website below and follow the links:
Albany Convention & Visitors Bureau www.albany.com/cvb/index.html

A Sketch of the Diocese of Georgia

St. John and St. Mark's is a member of the convocation of Albany, one of six in the Diocese of Georgia, which occupies the southern 33,000 square miles of the state. Our see city is Savannah.

As the name of the diocese implies, at one time it included all of Georgia. After so many congregations had formed that one bishop could not minister to them all, the diocese divided in 1907. North Georgia became the Diocese of Atlanta.

Now, 100 years later, the Diocese of Georgia includes 72 Episcopal congregations, half of which cluster in the larger cities, 9 in Savannah alone. Most of the rest are single churches in agricultural communities scattered across the state. Half are missions. The diocese applies an "asking" formula to each church to derive a proposed budget. The budget approved for 2008 is \$1,747,885.

While church membership averages about 260, it ranges from 1,700 to 3. The Diocese has 18,650 active members, age 16 and up, and about 15,650 communicants. Average Sunday attendance in 2006 was 7,127.

Of our 144 priests, 18 are women and two are African-American. Of the 36 vocational deacons listed in 2006, 24 were women, 4 African-American. The 1979 prayer book and the 1982 hymnal are standard throughout the diocese, though not the only ones used.

After the ordination of Bishop Robinson, disavowals at Georgia's diocesan convention were voted down by the majority. Vestries in two Georgia churches then voted to withdraw from the diocese. Like everywhere else, the Episcopalians in Georgia range from conservative to traditional to liberal. Bishop Henry Louttit is pastor to us all.

For more information, visit the diocesan website at <http://georgia.anglican.org> and follow the links.